Before the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 25, please add the following title:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Before the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 26, please add the following title:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Before the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 27, please add the following title:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

After page 22, please add, on a separate new page, the following section:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A building panel 20 is disclosed which is of sandwich construction having metal sheet structures 21, 22 interconnected by a core 23. The panel 20 includes profiled edge regions 24, 25 enabling the panel to interlock with a like panel. In one form a paper covering 27 is bonded to the metal sheet structure so that panel has a surface characteristic similar to that of plasterboard. A reinforcing element 40 is also disclosed which is arranged to be connected at the joint between abutting panels to improve the load bearing capacity of the panel 20.

Please substitute the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 23 and ending at page 6a, line 8 with the amended paragraph as follows:

According to this aspect, the present invention provides a building system including a building panel and a reinforcing element, the building panel having spaced metal sheets interconnected by a core, said metal sheets defining opposite major surfaces of said panel, each of said metal sheets including opposite edge regions which form longitudinal edge regions of the panel, wherein at least one of the edge regions of the metal sheets on both opposite sides of the panel is profiled to form connecting elements, the connecting elements

of the longitudinal edge regions of the panel being adapted to interfit with the connecting element of a respective one of the longitudinal edge regions of a like panel, the panel being configured such that the major surfaces of the interconnected panels are aligned and in substantially abutting relationship to form a substantially continuous surface and wherein the reinforcing element is operative to be installed at the joint formed on connection of the panel with a like panel and is secured in place by locating between the interfitting connecting elements to form a concealed reinforcing member which is operative to improve the load bearing characteristics of the interconnected panels.

Please substitute the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 12 and ending at page 7, line 15 with the amended paragraph as follows:

In a particularly preferred form, the sheet structure includes longitudinal edge regions which are profiled to enable the panels to be connected in abutting relationship with a like panel in edge to edge relationship and the reinforcing member is locatable within the joint formed at the abutting panels.

Please substitute the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 8 and ending at page 10, line 16 with the amended paragraph as follows:

With this arrangement, the fixed panels 10 have respective outer faces which incorporate the plasterboard paper covering and thereby have a general appearance of plasterboard. If required, edge trim (not shown) can be inserted between the adjacent panels. Typically the panels would include a bead or similar protrusion which locates within an associated groove (not shown) formed in the edge regions 13 and 14 of the respective panels. Alternatively, the joint between the panels could be concealed so that the ceiling surface is continuous using standard finishing techniques such as plaster rendering or the like.

Please substitute the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 29 and ending at page 13, line 2 with the amended paragraph as follows:

In the illustrated form, both the longitudinal edge regions 24 and 25 of the panel is slightly waisted to form a recessed portion 37 in the outer surface of both the structures 21 and 22. This recess is designed to enable the joint 36 between adjacent panels

to be easily covered over by plaster tape or plaster rendering which will be applied within the recess and create a flush surface across the joint.

Please substitute the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 10 and ending at page 14, line 16 with the amended paragraph as follows:

Figure 10 illustrates a further variation of the panel 20. This panel includes many similar features to the earlier embodiments and accordingly like reference numerals have been given to like features. In a similar arrangement to the previous embodiments, the panel 20 includes longitudinal edge regions 24, 25 which are profiled to enable the panel 20 to interlock with a like panel. A reinforcing member 40 is also arranged to interfit at the joint between adjacent panels.

Please substitute the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 22 and ending at page 14, line 30 with the amended paragraph as follows:

In the embodiment of Figure 10, the profiles have been specifically designed to give the panel enhanced load bearing characteristics at its joint with an adjacent panel. The male and female couplings are shaped to provide generally a part box section which interlocks with a snap fit action. This arrangement has the advantage that the box section provides good load bearing characteristics and the snap fit action draws the interlocking members together. This inhibits inadvertent separation of the members and also enables the interlocking panels to act as a single unit thereby enhancing the panels overall load bearing capabilities at this connection.

In the Claims:

Please cancel claim 32 and add new claim 37 as follows:

37. (New) A composite panel including spaced sheet metal structures which are interconnected by a core, each sheet metal structure including opposite edges which are shaped to form edge regions of the panel, each edge region including a pair of connecting elements, the connecting elements of each pair being formed at the edges of respective ones of the metal sheets, the connecting elements being in the form of interfitting channels and projections with each connecting element in the pair of one edge region being